

**Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Minutes**  
**DATCP, Madison WI**  
May 18th, 2005

**Attendance:**

**Voting members:** Bruce Allison, Bob Brush, Bob Dahl, Matt Duvall, Jeff Edgar, John Gall, Jeff Gorman, Leif Hubbard, Laura Jull, Dave Liska, Mike Maddox, Heather Mann, Mike Michlig, Ken Ottman, Joan Stevens, Dan Traas, and Dick Welch.

**Ex – officio, non-voting members:** Lisa Burban, Dick Rideout

**Non-voting guests:** Nathan Eisner, Mike LaBissoniere, Jeff Roe, Tracy Salisbury, Tracey Teodecki, Jim Warren, Olivia Witthun.

**Absent voting members:** Tim Bauknecht, Wayne Glowac, Bob Skiera, Joe Wilson.

**Meeting Minutes**

*Meeting called to order at 9:30 am*

**1) CALL TO ORDER – Dave Liska**

- a) Members & guests introduced themselves
- b) *Motion to accept the minutes from the last meeting was passed and carried*

**2) DNR REPORT – Dick Rideout**

- a) Nathan Eisner reviewed the Council's quarterly financial report. *The report was approved with no changes.*
- b) Dick refers to quarterly accomplishment report for detailed, but highlighted a few things DNR Urban Forestry has been working on lately.
  - i) Dick has been working on the Green Retrofit Conference which will take place in Milwaukee on Oct. 19 & 20th.
  - ii) Dick met with Audubon Society and Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative last week. He will continue to work to help develop the birding community as advocates for UF.
  - iii) EAB Taskforce will be conducting (2) simulations to test their emergency response protocols in preparation for the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer in WI. The first simulation will occur on June 15<sup>th</sup> and involve APHIS, DATCP, DNR, USFS and UWEX. The second will also include partners from the private sector and will be held on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Urban forestry will be represented by Dave Liska, Dave Scharfenberger (Wachtel Tree Science & Svc.) and Brian Swingle (Exec. Dir. of the Green Industry Fed)

- c) UF Vacancies: There have been no new developments, but Paul DeLong has conveyed that the Council's letters were well received. Urban Forestry still has three vacancy issues that have not been decided.
  - i) Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator (RUFC) position for the northern half of the Southeast Regions remains vacant.
  - ii) No action has been taken on upgrading the Northeast and South Central Regions' LTE Regional Urban Forestry Assistants to FTE positions.
  - iii) Status of the Urban Forestry Grants Manager position is still uncertain but Forestry is working to assure that this position remains dedicated to urban forestry regardless of pending budget action.
- d) Regional Urban Forestry Assistants Olivia Witthun & Mike LaBissoniere introduced themselves to the Council members and gave brief summaries of their backgrounds.
- e) Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator's Report – *Tracy Salisbury*
  - i) There was very good enthusiasm expressed by communities for Council members' participation in Tree City USA award ceremonies. Requests for appearances were up this year and Council participation helped meet the increased demand.
  - ii) Tracy's tenure as the RUFC representative to the Council is ending. Cindy Casey will be attending the next year's meetings.

### 3) **NOMINATION COMMITTEE REPORT – *Jeff Edgar***

- a) We are currently three members short of a full Council (Hinckley, Dochnal, & Giese have resigned).
  - i) ***Nathan will send thank you letters to Dochnal & Hinckley for their years of faithful service.***
- b) Seven positions are also up for renewal in June 2006. These include Bauknecht, Brush, Glowac, Liska, Michlig, Skiera & Traas.
  - i) ***Jeff Edgar will speak with these individuals to determine their interest in serving another term with the Council.***
  - ii) ***Nathan will distribute new membership list to Council which shows those Council rep. Positions that are vacant***
- c) Jeff brought up the possibility of adding a representative category to the Council
  - i) Several suggestions were offered for possible new representative categories:
    - (1) Municipal forester for a medium-size city (e.g. population = 15,000 to 50,000)
      - (a) Dick suggested using USFS community criteria to identify stratum of communities we need representation for.
    - (2) Indian tribe rep.

- (3) Civil engineer rep.
- (4) City planner rep or emergency planner rep
- ii) Discussion was tabled without resolution until the next meeting.
- d) There were no nominations to present for Council consideration.
  - i) Dave Liska added that all Council members should assist in identifying & nominating new members.
  - ii) *All members should forward any nominations to Jeff as soon as possible.*

**4) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Dave Liska**

- a) Council Outreach
  - i) A networking session was held in January at the Annual Conference with community and utility representatives. Many of the regional networking groups were in attendance. All attendees were encouraged to utilize their Council representatives to bring their issues/concerns to the Council's attention
    - (1) All regions now have active networking groups.
  - ii) Dick and Dave attended the WAA Board meeting in March to encourage them to utilize their Council representatives to bring their issues/concerns to the Council's attention. A similar presentation will be made to the WPRA at their upcoming meeting.
- b) Letters to the DNR Secretary and the Joint Finance Committee
  - i) Two letters have been written by individual Council members in addition to the Council's letter to DNR Secretary Hassett.
  - ii) Those individual Council members who have not already done so should contact their local legislators to express their concerns with regard to the DNR Forestry budget. They should also copy their letters to DNR Secretary Hassett and the Joint Finance Committee. It is crucial that all members get their letters out.
    - (1) Ken Ottman noted that Paul DeLong had passed around the Urban Forestry Council's letter at the last meeting of the Wisconsin Council on Forestry. Our message is being heard, but individuals should keep sending letters. Many other interested groups are also writing to voice their positions. So we must continue to express our opinion on the budget issue in order to keep our message from getting lost in the shuffle.
- c) Green Industry Day on the Hill (GIDOH)
  - i) Council members should refer to the GIDOH report which summarizes conversations between participants and individual representatives' at the February 15th event. This event raised awareness of the green industry and should make our role as advocates easier, as it has our industry on legislators' radar already. Dave Liska encouraged all Council members to participate the

next time the event is held in 2007. The report is a good reference for Council members' in their role as advocates.

- ii) The Urban Forestry Council's very own Day on the Hill generated a fact sheet which was used as a reference for Council members as they visited their legislators. Members should contact Nathan or Dick if they wish to receive copies of that fact sheet.
- d) Dave participated in the UW College of Ag. & Life Sciences (CALS) stakeholders meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Dave represented WAA and the Council to raise awareness of the need for UF support from CALS. Four general groups were represented, including plant producers, natural resources, livestock producers and the green industry. It was a good opportunity to network with these other groups. The green industry contingent used the event to express the inadequacy of CALS support of the green industry.
  - i) Dave et al. inquired about the hiring status of the urban cluster faculty position and was told that that position ranks near the top of hiring ladder but has not been filled due to the state legislature's unwillingness to provide 1/3 of the funding needed for the position, despite the fact that the other 2/3 of the funding had already been secured from industry contributions. **THIS IS A LOBBYING OPPORTUNITY for council members/organizations.**
  - ii) The green industry representatives also expressed skepticism over CALS ability to respond to the eventual detection of Emerald Ash Borer in Wisconsin. They were joined in this sentiment by members of the forestry interest group. There may be an opportunity to work together with forestry groups to lobby for common goals.
- e) Council Position Description
  - i) Please read the draft of the position description for Council members-at-large, which Nathan emailed to the group. Send any suggestions for revisions to Jeff Edgar for discussion by the Executive Committee.

## **5) GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE REPORT – *Joe Wilson***

- a) The Governor's Conference Report was read by Ken Ottman on behalf of Joe Wilson

## **6) WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON FORESTRY REPORT – *Ken Ottman***

- a) The Wisconsin Council on Forestry discussed budget issues and forest certification at its last meeting.
  - i) Budget
    - (1) Federal Budget
      - (a) A fifty-five percent reduction in funding for state and private forestry is anticipated in Fiscal Year 2006. It isn't yet clear what programs will be impacted specifically.
    - (2) State Budget

- (a) The Council has advised against using the forestry mil tax for unlawful retirement of state stewardship debt, and has recommended that the Governor's budget reassign these funds back to Forestry.
- (b) The Council also advised that the Governor's budget should restore the private lands forestry positions.

ii) Forest Certification

- (1) The state has certified all of its own lands already as well as most county forest land
- (2) The Council discussed the best method of certification of private forest lands that are enrolled in the state's Managed Forest Law (MFL) program. The management standards required by the MFL program already exceed the specification requirements of the American Tree Farm (ATF) system, which is widely recognized as a good means for certifying private woodlands. It is expected that MFL lands will qualify as certified by the ATF system. This is expected to give a distinct marketing advantage to WI forest products originating from these certified forests.

7) **SUPERIOR MEETING, JULY 21ST – *Dick Welch***

- a) The meeting will be held in the Superior City Council Chambers
- b) Dick passed out tourism information to the group for their visit to Superior
- c) All members spending Thursday evening in Superior are invited to Mary Morgan's (Superior's Dir. of Parks & Forestry) home for dinner.
- d) ***Dick Welch will forward hotel information to Nathan for distribution to the Council.***

8) **LUNCH – EVERY ROOT AN ANCHOR – *Bruce Allison***

- a) Bruce thanked the Council for their support of this project and presented a slideshow including a recap of some of the tree stories contained in the book.

9) **TCUSA BANQUET – *Dave Liska***

- a) The banquet will be held on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at Monona Terrace
- b) Copies of banquet tasks breakout sheet was passed around to group. Dave invited all those who lead tasks at the last banquet to head them up again in 2006.
- i) Three individuals have already volunteered to serve as committee chairs for 2006
  - (1) Education – Matt Duvall
  - (2) Exhibitors – Jeff Gorman?
  - (3) Registration – Mike Maddox?
- (a) Dick Welch recommended that we send a save-the-date card well in advance to insure that mayors/community reps will not have schedule conflicts.

- ii) Several committee chairs are still needed. These chairpersons should go out and solicit volunteers to serve on their committees.
  - (1) Publicity – a volunteer to chair this committee is still needed
    - (a) Ken suggests that we utilize the DNR's PR wing to promote this. Dick suggests that we need more bang for our buck this time around...we need better marketing. We may want to contract out the marketing work for this event.
    - (i) Jeff Gorman recommended we contact Wayne Glowac to utilize his PR firm...he may be interested in doing this on contract or pro bono.
  - (2) Decorations – Joan Stevens
  - (3) Speakers – Jeff Edgar
- c) Educational Workshops
  - i) Matt would like to evolve these workshops into a major attraction rather than simply a distraction for those municipalities arriving at the banquet early.
    - (1) They should be interactive rather than presentation focused
    - (2) Matt will send out these topics to the group to narrow the list of possibilities.
      - (a) Connecting trees with urban stormwater issues - Duvall
      - (b) Social aspects of disease and insect management - Duvall
      - (c) How can we build municipal programs beyond the street tree...working with private landowners, etc. - Duvall
      - (d) Marketing UF programs to policy makers - Duvall
      - (e) Invasive plant management – Jull
      - (f) Forest Management around homes – Brush
        - (i) Bob Brush will work on this issue if we decide to go with this one.
      - (g) Creative Financing for UF - Ottman
    - (3) We will need to plan ahead for supporting publications to go along with these workshops.
      - (a) Laura Jull volunteered to work on this with Matt
  - ii) The question was raised as to whether or not we can open these workshops to non-Tree Cities. This would be for the workshops only, not for the recognition ceremony.
    - (1) Jeff Roe suggested that this could increase incentive for those non-TCUSAs workshop participants by exposing them to the grandeur of the banquet.

- (2) Others contended that the banquet should be recognition only for those communities that achieved the TCUSA honor...there are other educational opportunities for non-TCUSAs. Discussion on this topic was tabled until a future meeting.

#### **10) US FOREST SERVICE REPORT – Lisa Burban**

- a) Lisa passed out a flyer summarizing the results of the STRATUM project. This handout summarizes benefit-cost analysis for trees in Midwestern cities. This is great fodder for showing to those policy-makers. The handouts are available from Lisa Burban...not yet available on the web. *Dick will notify the group once they become available on the Internet.*
- b) Lisa passed out a handout unveiling UFind, a searchable urban forestry research index to help us put together urban forestry talks. This database is not yet up and running, but *Lisa will email an announcement when it is available.*
- c) Lisa handed out copies of the urban forestry edition of the Natural Inquirers – an informational publication geared toward students/kids. DNR has a small cache of this publication...contact Dick if you need a few additional copies.
- d) Illinois Council on Forestry held a summit similar to Gov's Conference on a smaller scale. Like our Governor's Conference, the Illinois summit featured community forestry as one of its component themes. The top UF issues discussed were UF Public Education, UF advocacy for decision-makers, promoting arboriculture standards, and urban wood utilization.
- e) Federal budget is up in the air right now...this may impact the USFS UF program plan; stay tuned for developments.
- f) USFS is piloting a project to introduce a strain of DED-tolerant American elms near LaCrosse, WI. The intent is to introduce a population of these trees into wild areas where they may hybridize with native elms.
- g) The USFS UF program's new objective is to increase the proportion of Americans living in communities that are actively managing their trees. Fifty percent of the Northeast's population is already living in these cities. This new standard can more easily gauge the program's progress by providing a quantitative measure of success (% of population in these cities). This will be a very good focus for the program. This standard encourages the program to do two things specifically in order to reach its objective: 1) increase the number of communities managing their UF; 2) work with larger communities.

#### **11) NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Council Assistance with TCUSA award ceremonies
  - i) In Northeast Region alone, there are more than forty TCUSA communities. Council members' assistance with award presentations would allow UF representation at most if not all award ceremonies and would help increase communities' awareness of the Council.

- (1) Because of the 2006 TCUSA Banquet, demand for appearances will likely be lower next year. However, there may be some need for help in 2006 for communities that still desire a DNR/Council member appearance at their Arbor Day celebrations.
  - (2) Dick suggested that RUFCs distribute a list of TCUSA award presentations including date, time, and location. This could be done well in advance of the presentation and allow Council members to sign up to make appearances in their areas.
  - (3) Participating Council members could contact their RUFC prior to the appearance to get community background information they could use in their presentations.
- b) Dispatches from WAA
- i) John Gall summarized the efforts (past & present) to revise the State Pesticide Registry and posed it as a possible topic for the Council to officially weigh in on. The group discussed the implications of the registry.
  - (1) Bob Dahl recommended that members contact their state legislator if they are concerned about this issue. Revision of the embattled registry has been attempted on several occasions in the past.
  - (2) The group discussed whether or not this is an issue that the Council should take up and convey their opinion to the DNR Secretary
  - (3) The general consensus was that this is not a Council issue but rather that interested members should discuss together the possibility of reorganizing the effort to revise the registry within the Green Industry.
- c) Heather Mann is seeking volunteers for the Communications Committee
- i) Next meeting will feature Committee updates
  - ii) Members interested in taking part in this committee should contact Heather.
- d) Leif Hubbard spoke briefly regarding the reorganization of the WiDOT.

## **12) UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- a) Superior – Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>
  - i) Members should contact Nathan if they intend to attend this meeting but did not sign up already.
- b) DATCP, Madison - Wednesday, November 30th

## **13) MEETING ADJOURNED at 1430hrs CST**

### **Action Items**

- *Nathan will send thank you letters to Mark Dochnal & Kevin Hinckley for their years of faithful service to the Council*



- *Jeff Edgar will speak with those members whose terms will expire in June to determine their interest in serving another term with the Council*
- *Nathan will distribute an updated membership list to the Council that includes vacant Council rep. positions*
- *All members should forward any member nominations to Jeff Edgar as soon as possible*
- *Dick Welch will forward Superior area hotel information to Nathan for distribution to the Council.*
- *Dick Rideout will notify the group once STRATUM results become available on the Internet.*
- *Lisa will email an announcement when UFind is available on the Internet.*